

## Staff Report

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**File #:** 21-196**Version:** 1**Date:** 5/10/2021**Item #:** 5. a.

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**TO:** Mayor and City Council**FROM:** Councilor Vanessa Nordyke, Ward 7**SUBJECT:**

Motion from Councilor Vanessa Nordyke regarding City park usage and event permitting.

Ward(s): All Wards

Councilor(s): All Councilors

Neighborhood(s): All Neighborhoods

**MOTION:**

I move to direct the Salem Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to develop recommendations for usage and permitting of events at City parks.

**DISCUSSION:**

Salem city parks are in high demand, with demand at Riverfront Park expected to increase upon completion of the Rotary Amphitheater. This includes, for example, balancing the needs of local schools, community groups, and non-profit organizations who want to reserve the same space at an affordable cost with event promoters, performing artists, and out-of-town community groups. To balance the demands of a diverse array of park users, we should seek policy recommendations from our city's parks and recreation advisory board on park usage and permitting. SPRAB should review and identify best practices from other cities' park policies governing (1) general usage of the parks and (2) permitting for special events. SPRAB is urged to consider the equitable impact of potential recommendations. SPRAB will present its policy recommendations in a memorandum to City Council.

In making this motion, I want to stress that I am asking SPRAB for policy recommendations, not recommendations concerning administration. Council can adopt policies or ordinances guiding park administration, but both the SRC and the Charter reserve the administration of parks to the Manager and Public Works Director. While Council can adopt an ordinance or resolution establishing park usage policies, the administration and ordinances is left to the Manager and Director. Also, as a reminder, our City is currently operating under an Emergency Declaration related to COVID, which

authorizes the City Manager to issue emergency orders to respond to the emergency. The City Manager has done so and has suspended the issuance of event permits at City Parks. Council can adopt policies and ordinances related to park administration, but would also need to amend the Emergency Declaration to make those changes as well.

**Attachments:**  
None